

For Immediate Release
Friday, March 5, 2010

Area Hospitals Return to Normal Hospital Visiting Policies

Virginia reports normal flu levels

March 5, 2010—Effective Monday, March 8, area hospitals will return to normal visiting policies. Visitors of any age are permitted within area hospitals, including siblings of newborns who are under the age of 18.



According to the latest update from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most states in the nation are no longer reporting any flu activity, and Virginia is reporting normal flu levels.



In a shared interest of public safety, 18 area hospitals collectively restricted minors from visiting hospital patients in October 2009, to limit the spread of 2009 H1N1 flu. Medical evidence suggested children under 18 to be likely carriers of the illness. The restriction was put into place when 2009 H1N1 flu activity was widespread in the U.S.



“I commend the hospitals and health systems in Hampton Roads for the extraordinary collaboration during this unique flu season to protect the community,” says State Health Commissioner Karen Remley, MD, MBA. “I am confident these enhanced relationships will serve the community well, now and in the future,” she continues.



Experts caution the community about relaxing personal preventative measures that limit the spread of flu and other communicable diseases.



The goal of area health care providers is to use every available and appropriate resource to protect patients from exposure to outside infections and illness. Area hospitals and public health officials will continue monitoring flu levels in the region and around the world for indications of increasing levels. In the event that flu levels rise again, area hospitals are prepared to implement the visitation restrictions in the best interest of public safety.



Individuals experiencing flu-like illness are still asked not to visit area hospitals.

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The collaboration involved 18 area hospitals who stand ready to collaborate on any future public health concerns.

Participating hospitals include:

Bon Secours DePaul Medical Center
Bon Secours Mary Immaculate Hospital
Bon Secours Maryview Medical Center
Chesapeake Regional Medical Center
Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters
Naval Medical Center Portsmouth
Riverside Regional Medical Center
Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital
Riverside Tappahannock Hospital
Riverside Walter Reed Hospital
Sentara Norfolk General Hospital
Sentara Bayside Hospital
Sentara CarePlex Hospital
Sentara Heart Hospital
Sentara Leigh Hospital
Sentara Obici Hospital
Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital
Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center

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